

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 6, 2014 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall. Due to Chairperson Herring's appointment to the Planning Commission, Vice-Chairperson Habel led the meeting.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Sargent led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bajaj, Furey, Rudolph,
Sargent, Siani, and Vice-Chairperson Habel.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Engineering Manager Semaan, Associate Engineer
Sedadi, Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo, and
Torrance Police Sergeant Koenig.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Siani moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Sargent moved to approve the August 4, 2014 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Rudolph seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Furey abstaining).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1

Vice-Chairperson Habel explained the policies and procedures of the Traffic Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to City Council.

Larry Fisher, Briarwood Drive, asked the rationale behind the planned elimination of the left turn lane at 242nd Street and Hawthorne Boulevard. He stated that its removal would cause a hardship to the community and businesses as well as contribute to cut-through traffic.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that the removal is a condition of approval for the development of the southeast corner of Pacific Coast Highway. He offered to research Mr. Fisher's concern and bring back information.

7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION

7a. NOMINATION OF CHAIR

This item was considered following 7D.

7b. PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK ENHANCEMENTS AT 182ND STREET AND BAILEY DRIVE

Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo provided a PowerPoint presentation on existing and potential crosswalk enhancements at 182nd Street and Bailey Drive. He presented background and showed slides of the aerial view, intersection diagram, and westbound street view of the existing crosswalk. He noted that the west leg of the intersection is painted with a ladder crosswalk with pedestrian crossing and advanced crosswalk warning signs. Additionally, a basic crosswalk is marked across the south leg. He stated that a crossing guard is assigned to the southwest corner in the mornings and afternoons on school days, mainly crossing Edison Elementary School children in the marked crosswalks. He noted the 35 MPH speed limit and red curb at Bailey Drive.

With the aid of slides, he described nine potential crosswalk enhancements, listed from least intrusive and costly to most intrusive and costly: 1) High Visibility Signing and Striping; 2) In-Street Yield Signage; 3) Advanced Yield Lines and Signs; 4) Flashing Amber Beacons; 5) Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon; 6) Adult Crossing Guards; 7) In-Roadway Warning Lights; 8) Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon; and 9) Full Traffic Control Signal. He stated that staff reviewed the accident history for the past three years and found one of nine collisions to be pedestrian related. He noted that staff has determined that the accident history and number of pedestrians do not warrant a full signal at this intersection.

Engineering Manager Semaan thanked Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo for his extensive research, data collection, and field investigation. He pointed out that the number of pedestrians using the crosswalk is low, and that Edison Elementary School children have the opportunity to cross at signalized intersections at Prairie Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard that also have crossing guards. He noted that staff is not making a recommendation at this time, but are providing a list of potential crosswalk enhancements as requested by the Traffic Commission.

Commissioner Furey stated that the crosswalk is not safe and initiated a brief discussion regarding the possibility of eliminating it.

Melinda Burke, Regina Avenue, stated that it was her son who was struck by a vehicle while crossing at the crosswalk. She maintained that crossing the intersection is always dangerous, not just during school times. She noted that \$80,000 for a flashing beacon is nothing compared to the cost of her son's medical bills. She stated that now that there has been a tragic accident, the City has to do something about it.

David Burke, Regina Avenue, stated that the average speed on 182nd Street is 40 MPH and maintained that the intersection needs a flashing beacon, preferably pedestrian activated. He stated that drivers are blinded when the sun is rising or setting and that there is poor lighting at night. He asserted that, if the crosswalk was removed, no one would walk to Prairie Avenue or Hawthorne Boulevard to cross the street.

Commissioner Bajaj received clarification that there are Flashing Amber Beacons but no Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons in the City. He expressed concern that pedestrians often have a false sense of security when crossing at crosswalks.

Commissioner Rudolph noted that, if a crosswalk has been there for many years, it would be difficult to train pedestrians to not use that intersection. He stated that the intersection is dangerous, that existing signage is minimal, and that installing green day-glo signage or other visual enhancement is appropriate.

Commissioner Sargent offered his observation that both crosswalks need painting and, when driving eastbound, one of the signs appeared to be partially obscured by a light pole. He expressed interest in installing signage with option #1, flashing LED lights around the perimeter of the signs.

Commissioner Siani voiced her concern that drivers become conditioned to continually flashing lights and they lose their effectiveness. She pointed out that it is legal to cross at any corner whether there is a crosswalk or not.

Commissioner Furey stated that it is an unsafe intersection, even with a crossing guard, and that action needs to be taken immediately. He suggested temporarily removing the crosswalk until a solution is determined and indicated that the City may now become liable if there is another accident.

In response to Commissioner Rudolph's inquiry, staff explained that pedestrian activated options are #s 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9.

Commissioner Bajaj received clarification from Engineering Manager Semaan that #1 with the flashing perimeter can be pre-timed for school hours.

Vice-Chairperson Habel stated that it is a dangerous crossing at all times, that a price tag cannot be put on somebody's life, and suggested repainting it immediately until a better option is decided upon. He added that pedestrians have crossed the intersection for years and are not going to change.

Engineering Manager Semaan pointed out that paint does not change the perception of the driver, only the pedestrian. He maintained that a pedestrian's false sense of security is important to consider, and that removal of a crosswalk often reduces the number of collisions. He presented another option: to increase the size of the signage to 36 inches. He stated that staff does not recommend in-pavement markers due to the high rate of failure, adding that some cities are removing them.

Commissioner Bajaj stated that he avoids marked crosswalks whenever possible, noting that a car in the curb lane often stops for a pedestrian but the car in the number one lane does not.

Sergeant Koenig pointed out that the crosswalk is not half way between Hawthorne Boulevard and Prairie Avenue, and that the crosswalk was originally intended for crossing to Magruder Middle School. He noted the false sense of security and maintained that the safest location to cross is Prairie Avenue or Doty Avenue.

Commissioner Rudolph asked what could be done immediately and Engineering Manager Semaan responded that larger, day-glo signs could be ordered, adding that it would take four to six weeks. He stated that staff could also investigate lighting with Southern California Edison. He noted that a public hearing is required before removal of a crosswalk.

Commissioner Sargent stated that he would like the light pole to be moved and voiced his support for larger signs with flashing, pedestrian activated, LED lights. He asked staff to investigate the use of wireless technology that would allow all four signs to flash when pedestrian activated.

MOTION: Commissioner Rudolph moved to direct staff to 1) review street lighting, 2) order and install four 36 inch day-glo signs, and 3) bring back analysis of options #4 Flashing Amber Beacons and #5 Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon with pedestrian activation to the November 2014 Commission meeting. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; the motion passed on a 5-1 roll call vote (Commissioner Furey voting no).

7c. TRAFFIC COMMISSION 2014 WORK PLAN – FIFTH PRIORITY: ANZA CORRIDOR TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

Associate Engineer Sedadi presented background and called attention to the list of comments in the material of record that Commissioners Sargent and Siani provided regarding enhancements or improvements along the Anza Corridor. She noted that Commissioner Rudolph's comments were included in supplemental materials and asked Commissioners to provide any further comments.

Referring to the last bullet point on the list, Commissioner Sargent offered his observation that the amount of traffic going up Calle Mayor and north on Anza Avenue is more than the amount of traffic going on Pacific Coast Highway up Anza Avenue and continuing past Calle Mayor.

Associate engineer Sedadi stated that signal timing would be adjusted based on results of a 24 hour count.

Commissioner Siani related comments that she has heard from residents regarding problems with school pick up and drop off.

Sergeant Koenig discussed plans to start going to Back to School nights to educate parents about proper pick up and drop off.

Responding to Commissioner Rudolph's inquiry, Engineering Manager Semaan noted that once finalized staff would communicate the recommendations to the Project Manager to be considered as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects, adding that any comments outside the limits of the projects would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Rudolph recommended looking at opportunities to extend left turn pockets wherever possible. He initiated discussion regarding the possibility for staff to reach out to homeowner associations and residents to solicit input; however, it was decided that this would delay start of the CIP projects.

Commissioner Bajaj offered his observation that the bike lane between Sepulveda Boulevard and 190th Street seems narrow and was advised by staff that it is the standard five feet width. He also suggested removing the crosswalk on Anza Avenue between Del Amo Boulevard and 190th Street.

MOTION: Commissioner Rudolph moved to concur with staff recommendation as presented with the addition of Commissioner Bajaj's suggestions to the list of comments. Commissioner Furey seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

7d. RECEIVE AND FILE QUARTERLY TRAFFIC COMMISSION SUMMARY OF REQUESTS

Associate Engineer Sedadi presented the Quarterly Traffic Commission Summary of Requests for October and November 2011, and September 2013 to September 2014. Referring to improvements to the intersection of 182nd Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, she reported that Caltrans has selected a contractor and that staff will be notified of the pre-construction meeting.

Engineering Manager Semaan noted that the majority of elements have been completed. Referring to the first item, Consider North/South split phasing of the Lowes/Costco signal on Skypark Drive, he reported that engineering staff is recommending contracting a consultant to analyze current phasing and to come back with a planned modification or revision for split phasing. Referring to Commissioner Habel's request on May 5, 2014, he advised that the faded striping on Del Amo Circle and Sepulveda Boulevard is on private property.

Commissioner Rudolph complained about the slurry seal recently completed in his neighborhood, and Engineering Manager Semaan asked him to send specifics that he would relay to the Project Manager.

Commissioner Rudolph asked staff to provide an update on Protected Permissive Left Turns and staff advised that an item is planned for next month.

7a. NOMINATION OF CHAIR

Engineering Manager Semaan noted that Chairperson Herring's appointment to the Planning Commission has created a vacancy.

Commissioner Sargent nominated Vice-Chairperson Habel and Commissioner Furey nominated Commissioner Rudolph for Chairperson of the Traffic Commission. A roll call vote reflected a tie, 3-3. A vote was taken a second time with the same result.

Vice-Chairperson Habel declined the nomination and nominated Commissioner Rudolph for Chairperson.

Commissioner Sargent stated his opinion that all Commissioners should have the opportunity to serve as Chairperson.

Commissioner Sargent nominated Commissioner Bajaj and Commissioner Siani nominated Commissioner Furey for Chairperson of the Traffic Commission.

Commissioner Rudolph was elected Chairperson of the Traffic Commission with a majority of votes.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

8a. Engineering Manager Semaan relayed City Clerk Poirier's clarification that a Commissioner can vote to approve minutes even if he or she did not attend that meeting.

8b. Engineering Manager Semaan announced Commissioner re-certification training on October 29.

8c. Commissioner Rudolph expressed his appreciation to Vice-Chairperson Habel for leading the meeting and to Sergeant Koenig for his valuable input.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:42 p.m., Vice-Chairperson Habel adjourned the meeting to November 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall and, hearing no objection, so ordered.

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Approved as submitted November 3, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
